

NATIONAL SPRINT CAR HALL of FAME & MUSEUM

SIG HAUGDAHL

Sig Haugdahl, born in Trondjham, Norway, where he excelled in speed skating, came to the United States when he was nineteen. He made his home in Albert Lea (Minn.) and, with his exceptional mechanical ability, soon started in a local machine shop.

His interest in speed and machines came together and he started competing as a motorcycle racer on southern Minnesota race tracks. He started his automobile racing career in 1912 with promoter J. Alex Sloan.

When Sloan started the International Motor Contest Association (IMCA) in 1915, he found himself running against the likes of Louis Disbrow, Fred Horey, George Clark, Ray Lampkin and George Stewart (alias Leon Duray).

Haugdahl started making a name for himself in 1918, while driving a car financed by Sloan, by lowering Barney Oldfield's mile record at the Minnesota Fairgrounds. Three years later Sig won with the car at the Iowa State Fairgrounds in Des Moines.

In 1921-1922, Sloan and Haugdahl collaborated on the design and construction of a long, narrow and streamlined Fiat, named the "Wisconsin Special," for the modified aircraft engine under its hood. Sig moved to Daytona Beach (Fla.) to achieve his goal of breaking Tommy Milton's world speed record on the

onds; 90 m.p.h.)

Two years later, Bill Pickens imported Haugdahl and the "Wisconsin Special" to the new Ascot to race Ralph DePalma's Miller under IMCA sanction.

In 1925, in addition to competing in regular 'big car' meets, Haugdahl also competed in the 200-lap Targo Florio road race, won by "Cannonball" Baker.

By 1926, Haugdahl vacated Ascot, as did Ralph DePalma, Frank Lockhart and Fred Frame. Haugdahl headed back to the Midwest to challenge 1925-26 IMCA champion Fred Horey.

From 1927 until 1932, Sig Haugdahl claimed J. Alex Sloan's IMCA championship point title an incredible six times, besting such competition as Disbrow, Lockhart, Horey and Duray. Sig used a Miller to claim the crowns. In the early Thirties, his fellow racers included future IMCA greats Gus Schrader and Emory Collins.

After the 1934 season, Haugdahl retired to Florida. He was married and they had three children.



Sig Haugdahl (Bruce Craig Collection)

On April 6, 1922, he drove the straight mile at Daytona Beach in 19.97 seconds, or 180.27 m.p.h., or three miles a minute. And he set another IMCA-sanctioned record for the mile circle at St. Louis in November (40.09 sec-